

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A facsimile machine comprising:

an input port for coupling ~~adapted to be coupled~~ to a telephone line;

a controller coupled to said input port;

a memory device coupled to said controller;

a plurality of module ports, each of said plurality of module ports for coupling ~~adapted to be coupled~~ to one of a plurality of equipment modules such that more than one equipment module can be simultaneously coupled to said facsimile machine; and

an input/output controller coupled between said controller and said plurality of module ports,

wherein said facsimile machine controller ~~is adapted to receive~~ receives a data transfer, via said telephone line, from a service center, said data transfer intended for one of said plurality of equipment modules coupled to said facsimile machine ~~via said telephone line, said controller determines~~ determine said one of said plurality of equipment modules said data transfer is intended for based on information included in said data transfer and determines if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer, and if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer, said controller causes said input/output controller to route said data transfer to said one of said plurality of equipment modules.

2. Cancelled.

3. (Currently Amended) The facsimile machine according to claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is not available to receive said data transfer, said controller is further adapted to store stores said data transfer in said

~~memory if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is not available to receive said data transfer.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The facsimile machine according to claim 1_2, wherein said controller determines if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available based on time of day.

5. (Currently Amended) The facsimile machine according to claim 1_2, wherein said controller determines if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available based on the date.

6. (Currently Amended) The facsimile machine according to claim 1, wherein said ~~facsimile machine controller is further adapted to receive~~ receives data from said plurality of equipment modules and ~~send~~ said controller sends said data to a said service center via said telephone line.

7. (Original) The facsimile machine according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of module ports includes a serial data port.

8. (Original) The facsimile machine according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of module ports includes an infrared transceiver port.

9. (Original) The facsimile machine according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of module ports includes a LAN port.

10. (Original) The facsimile machine according to claim 9, wherein said LAN port is wireless.

11. (Currently Amended) A system for routing a data transfer comprising:

a plurality of customer equipment modules; and

a facsimile machine coupled to each of said plurality of customer equipment modules, said facsimile machine comprising:

an input port for coupling ~~adapted to be coupled~~ to a telephone line;

a controller coupled to said input port;

a memory device coupled to said controller;

a plurality of module ports, each of said plurality of module ports for coupling said facsimile machine adapted to be coupled to a respective one of said plurality of customer equipment modules such that more than one customer equipment module can be simultaneously coupled to said facsimile machine; and

an input/output controller coupled between said controller and said plurality of module ports,

wherein said facsimile machine being adapted to receive receives said data transfer from a service center via said telephone line, said data transfer being intended for one of said plurality of customer equipment modules coupled to said facsimile machine, said controller being further adapted to determine determines said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules said data transfer is intended for based on information included in the data transfer and determines if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer, and if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer, said controller causes said input/output controller to route said data transfer to said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules.

12. Cancelled.

13. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 11_42, wherein if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is not available to receive said data transfer, said controller is further adapted to store stores said data transfer in said memory if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is not available to receive said data transfer.

14. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 11_42, wherein said controller determines if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available based on time of day.

15. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 11_12, wherein said controller determines if said one of said plurality of equipment modules is available based the date.

16. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 11, wherein said facsimile machine controller ~~is further adapted to receive~~ receives data from said plurality of equipment modules and ~~send~~ said controller sends said data to said a service center via said telephone line.

17. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 16, wherein said data received from said plurality of equipment modules includes diagnostic information.

18. (Original) The system according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of module ports includes a serial data port.

19. (Original) The system according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of module ports includes an infrared transceiver port.

20. (Original) The system according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of module ports includes a LAN port.

21. (Original) The system according to claim 20, wherein said LAN port is wireless.

22. (Original) The system according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a postage scale.

23. (Original) The system according to claim 22, wherein said data transfer includes a rate update.

24. (Original) The system according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a postage meter.

25. (Original) The system according to claim 24, wherein said data transfer includes funds for said postage meter.

26. (Original) The system according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a mailing machine.

27. (Original) The system according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a personal computer.

28. (Currently Amended) A method for routing a data transfer comprising the steps of:

receiving said data transfer at a facsimile machine, said facsimile machine having a plurality of customer equipment modules simultaneously coupled thereto, said data transfer being intended for one of said plurality of customer equipment modules;

determining said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules for which said data transfer is intended based on information included in said data transfer;

determining if said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer; and

if said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer, routing said data transfer to said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules.

29. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein if said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules is not available to receive said data transfer, said method further comprises:

storing said data transfer in a memory.

30. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said step of determining said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules further comprises:

reading a header associated with said data transfer, said header specifying said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules for which said data transfer is intended.

31. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said step of determining if said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer further comprises:

monitoring operation status of said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules.

32. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said step of determining if said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer further comprises:

determining a time of day; and

comparing said determined time of day to a predetermined time of day when said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules will accept a data transfer.

33. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said step of determining if said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules is available to receive said data transfer further comprises:

determining the date; and

comparing said determined date to predetermined dates when said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules will accept a data transfer

34. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said data transfer is from a service center and received by said facsimile machine via a telephone line.

35. (Original) The method according to claim 34, wherein said service center sends said data transfer in response to a request from said one of said plurality of customer equipment modules.

36. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a postage scale.

37. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a postage meter.

38. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a mailing machine.

39. (Original) The method according to claim 28, wherein said plurality of customer equipment modules includes a personal computer.